

§411.655 How will the PM refer the dispute to us?

The PM has 20 working days from the failure to come to a mutually agreeable solution with an EN to refer the dispute to us with all relevant information. The information should include:

- (a) A description of the disputed issue(s);
- (b) A summary of the EN's and PM's position related to each disputed issue; and
- (c) A description of any solutions proposed by the EN and PM when the EN sought resolution through the PM's grievance procedures, including the reasons each party rejected each proposed solution.

§411.660 Is SSA's decision final?

Yes. Our decision is final.

Subpart J—The Ticket to Work Program and Alternate Participants Under the Programs For Payments For Vocational Rehabilitation Services

§411.700 What is an alternate participant?

An alternate participant is any public or private agency (other than a participating State VR agency described in §§404.2104 and 416.2204 of this chapter), organization, institution, or individual with whom the Commissioner has entered into an agreement or contract to provide VR services to disabled beneficiaries under the programs described in subpart V of part 404 and subpart V of part 416 of this chapter. In this subpart J, we refer to these programs as the programs for payments for VR services.

§411.705 Can an alternate participant become an EN?

In any State where the Ticket to Work program is implemented, each alternate participant whose service area is in that State will be asked to choose if it wants to participate in the program as an EN.

§411.710 How will an alternate participant choose to participate as an EN in the Ticket to Work program?

(a) When the Ticket to Work program is implemented in a State, each alternate participant whose service area is in that State will be notified of its right to choose to participate as an EN in the program in that State. The notification to the alternate participant will provide instructions on how to become an EN and the requirements that an EN must meet to participate in the Ticket to Work program.

(b) An alternate participant who chooses to become an EN must meet the requirements to be an EN, including—

- (1) Enter into an agreement with SSA to participate as an EN under the Ticket to Work program (see §411.320);
- (2) Agree to serve a prescribed service area (see §411.320);
- (3) Agree to the EN reporting requirements (see §411.325); and
- (4) Elect a payment option under one of the two EN payment systems (see §411.505).

§411.715 If an alternate participant becomes an EN, will beneficiaries for whom an employment plan was signed prior to implementation be covered under the Ticket to Work program payment provisions?

No. When an alternate participant becomes an EN in a State in which the Ticket to Work program is implemented, those beneficiaries for whom an employment plan was signed prior to the date of implementation of the program in the State, will continue to be covered for a limited time under the programs for payments for VR services (see §411.730).

§411.720 If an alternate participant chooses not to become an EN, can it continue to function under the programs for payments for VR services?

Once the Ticket to Work program has been implemented in a State, the alternate participant programs for payments for VR services begin to be phased-out in that State. We will not pay any alternate participant under these programs for any services that are provided under an employment plan that is signed on or after the date

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of implementation of the Ticket to Work program in that State. If an employment plan was signed before that date, we will pay the alternate participant, under the programs for payments for VR services, for services provided prior to January 1, 2004 if all other requirements for payment under these programs are met. We will not pay an alternate participant under these programs for any services provided on or after January 1, 2004.

§ 411.725 If an alternate participant becomes an EN and it has signed employment plans, both as an alternate participant and an EN, how will SSA pay for services provided under each employment plan?

We will continue to abide by the programs for payments for VR services in cases where services are provided to a beneficiary under an employment plan signed prior to the date of implementation of the Ticket to Work program in the State. However, we will not pay an alternate participant under these programs for services provided on or after January 1, 2004. For those employment plans signed by a beneficiary and the EN after implementation of the program in the State, the EN's elected EN payment system under the Ticket to Work program applies.

§ 411.730 What happens if an alternate participant signed an employment plan with a beneficiary before Ticket to Work program implementation in the State and the required period of substantial gainful activity is not completed by January 1, 2004?

The beneficiary does not have to complete the nine-month continuous period of substantial gainful activity (SGA) prior to January 1, 2004, in order for the costs of the services to be payable under the programs for payments for VR services. The nine-month SGA period can be completed after January 1, 2004. However, SSA will not pay an alternate participant under these programs for the costs of any services provided after December 31, 2003.

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